Tridentine Community News

August 9, 2009

Conclusions to the Orations of the Mass

Today's column is an updated version of a topic previously run on December 10, 2006. Because many of our readers have started attending the Extraordinary Form Mass since that date, we thought it beneficial to readdress this subject.

The Orations are the prayers which the priest recites or sings alone: the Collect (Opening Prayer), the Secret (Prayer Over the Gifts), and the Postcommunion (Prayer After Communion). The Orations are not to be confused with the Antiphons, which the choir sings while the priest recites them (the Introit, Offertory, and Communion). Only the Orations have concluding phrases.

Both in hand missals and in our weekly Latin/English Propers Handouts, one sees abbreviations for the conclusions to the Orations. Only a few identifying words are printed, for example: "*Per Dóminum*." The full text is not provided each week, because it is always the same. In addition, there is only so much space on the page; on days with lengthy readings, we struggle to fit everything on the handout as it is. Therefore, it behooves all of us to know what those abbreviations signify.

Abbreviations Not Allowed

In the Ordinary Form of Holy Mass, one often hears short conclusions to the Orations (e.g.: "…Who is Lord for ever and ever. Amen." or "…through Christ our Lord. [*Per Christum Dóminum nostrum.*] Amen.") In the Tridentine, abbreviated conclusions are not permitted in the Orations. They are, however, used at other points within the Mass, for example at the end of paragraphs in the Canon.

The Texts of the Conclusions

A particular conclusion is used based on the context of the Oration.

<u>For prayers addressed to God the Father:</u> *Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spíritus Sancti, Deus: per ómnia sæcula sæculórum. Amen.* [Abbreviation: "*Per Dóminum."*]

(Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen.)

<u>For prayers addressed to God the Father in which the Holy Ghost is mentioned:</u> *Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte ejusdem Spíritus Sancti, Deus: per ómnia sæcula sæculórum. Amen.* [Abbreviation: "*Per Dóminum… in unitáte ejusdem."*]

(Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the same Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen.)

<u>For prayers making mention of God the Son:</u> *Per eúmdem Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spíritus Sancti, Deus: per ómnia sæcula sæculórum. Amen.* [Abbreviation: "*Per eúmdem Dóminum."*]

(Through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen.)

<u>For prayers making mention of the Holy Ghost:</u> *Per Jesum Christum Fílium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte ejusdem Spíritus Sancti, Deus: per ómnia sæcula sæculórum. Amen.* [Abbreviation: "*Per Jesum Christum."*]

(Through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the same Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen.)

<u>For prayers in which the final clause refers to God the Son:</u> *Qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitáte Spíritus Sancti, Deus: per ómnia sæcula sæculórum. Amen.* [Abbreviation: "*Qui tecum."*]

(Who with Thee liveth and reigneth in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen.)

<u>For prayers addressed directly to God the Son:</u> *Qui vívis et regnas, cum Deo Patre in unitáte Spíritus Sancti, Deus, per ómnia sæcula sæculórum. Amen.* [Abbreviation: "*Qui vívis."*]

(Who livest and reignest, with God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen.)

Biblical Support

Perhaps you have heard this quotation from Holy Scripture: "…whatsoever you shall ask the Father in My Name, that will I do: that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you shall ask Me any thing in My Name, that I will do." (John 14:13-14). Our Lord is not stating "whatsoever you shall ask *through Me*", but rather "<u>in My Name</u>". One could thus logically conclude that a prayer to the Father which concludes with "*Per Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum…*" will be more effective than one that concludes with the simpler "*Per Christum Dóminum nostrum*".

By extension of this train of thought, one might wish to employ such full conclusions in one's own personal prayers to the God the Father. It certainly can't hurt, and it may actually help the efficaciousness of one's prayers, as it does fulfill our Lord's wish.

Lest anyone scoff that such attention to detail is pharisaical or ridiculous, we repeat an analogy that we have used several times before: Following such thinking is akin to taking the time to earn frequent flyer miles. A small amount of additional effort in everyday activities can lead to free travel. If prayer can be made more effective, or indulgences can be earned, by attention to a few small details, then why not make that effort? The Extraordinary Form of Holy Mass certainly sets an example of following Sacred Scripture in this regard.